

Appropriations Bill Riders

Defense of the Environment Amendment to H.R. 350

Summary

What H.R. 350 Does. H.R. 350 extends the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, which applies to mandates on state and local governments, to the private sector and creates a new procedural hurdle for the enactment of legislation imposing new mandates on the private sector. Under the bill, any Member may assert that legislation on the floor contains a mandate which will have an impact on the private sector greater than \$100 million. When the Member raises that point of order there is twenty minutes of debate and a majority vote to override the point of order must be won for consideration of the bill to proceed.

H.R. 350 applies to a wide range of legislation. Environmental protection, minimum wage, and worker safety are just some of the legislative proposals that would be subject to this procedural requirement.

What the Defense of the Environment Amendment Does. The Defense of the Environment Amendment extends the same procedural protections to legislative proposals that weaken protections for public health, safety or the environment. Thus, any Member could raise a point of order and obtain a brief debate and vote on any legislation that would undermine the laws that protect our environment, public health, or safety.

What Is the Need for the Defense of the Environment Amendment. Over the last four years, many anti-environmental riders have been included in "must-pass" legislation. From blocking the regulation of radioactive contaminants in drinking water to delaying our efforts to cleanup air pollution in the national parks, these riders have threatened each of our environmental laws. The vast majority of these riders were never considered in the Committee of jurisdiction and never received adequate debate or a separate vote. The Defense of the Environment Amendment would provide a procedural tool to ensure that these provisions receive a brief debate and vote.

Who Supports the Defense of the Environment Amendment? The following groups support the Defense of the Environment Amendment:

Environmental Groups

American Rivers
Center for Marine Conservation
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund
Environmental Defense Fund
Izaak Walton League
League of Conservation Voters
National Environmental Trust
National Parks and Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Population Action International
Rails to Trails Conservancy
Scenic America
Sierra Club
Union of Concerned Scientists
United States Public Interest Research Group
Zero Population Growth
Labor Groups
AFL-CIO
AFSCME
UAW
United Steelworkers of America

Consumer, Health, and Education Groups

American Public Health Association
Consumers Union
National Education Association
Public Citizen
Safe Tables Our Priority

